

Written public testimony: Normal Neighborhood Plan

From : Amy Miller <amymillerediting@gmail.com>

Wed, Apr 30, 2014 09:39 PM

Subject : Written public testimony: Normal Neighborhood Plan

To : brandon goldman <brandon.goldman@ashland.or.us>

Dear Mr. Goldman,

Thank you for inviting public comments regarding the Normal Neighborhood Plan. I would like to submit the following comment for the City Council meeting on May 6th.

As a homeowner in the Ashland Meadows subdivision off lower Clay Street—and directly adjacent to the Normal Avenue development area—I would like to add my voice to those of my many neighbors who oppose aspects of the plan.

My main concern is the multi-dwelling high-density (NN-03) area that keeps appearing on the plan on the parcel now owned by the Baptist church (Rogue Valley Church). I am continually perplexed that this high-density development keeps appearing on the plan—sometimes a two-story complex, sometimes three, sometimes to the east or west—despite the fact that every time, the neighbors on nearby parcels loudly oppose this part of the development. I would like the high-density part of this plan to be reduced to multi-dwelling low-density (NN-02) zoning for four primary reasons:

1) Lower Clay Street, only a block from the projected apartment complex, has already borne the brunt of high-density housing in Ashland. We already have the (mostly rented and financially shaky) condo complex on McCall Avenue, the large apartment complex on Villard Street, and the eight-unit complex on Dollarhide that went in about a year ago. Lower Clay Street has done its bit for Ashland's high-density housing and is beginning to feel like a dumping ground for these complexes.

2) East Main is already congested and dangerous during school drop-off and pick-up times and on Growers' Market days, and no plan seems to be in place to pay for the needed improvements to it when hundreds of households are added. At every planning commission meeting I've attended, new and conflicting information is presented about how the cost may be distributed among East Main homeowners.

3) The two creeks on either side of the parcel and their associated wetlands are a sensitive and ever-changing habitat for birds and animals such as quails and foxes, and are vital to the neighborhood's

quiet, semi-rural beauty. Adding so many households will undoubtedly impact this sensitive natural area; no amount of planning can prevent that.

4) I find it very disturbing that this high-density complex keeps coming up only because the current landowner and a potential developer want to do it. This looks to me like short-term cash for somebody and long-term consequences for the neighborhood. NN-02 zoning, such as they type that already exists in Meadowbrook Park Estates, Ashland Meadows, and Chautauqua Trace, has already proven fairly harmonious to Ashland's character and needs and would be a much better choice.

Thank you for your attention.

Amy Miller
244 Meadow Dr.
Ashland, OR 97520
(541) 482-2344
amymillerediting@gmail.com
